

Today's News - Wednesday, September 3, 2014

- The Carbuncle Cup 2014 winner is such a carbuncle that even the chair of the planning board that approved it years ago admits: "It is a flawed project and I regret my role as its midwife."
- Baillieu minces no words about Gehry's "towering folly" in Arles being "defiantly a 'destination building' - Arles doesn't need rescuing from oblivion by a single miraculous piece of architecture."
- Piano's Centro Botín rising on the public waterfront in Santander, Spain, is raising the ire of critics who claim it is "a modern-day pyramid for the glory of a banker in his company town."
- It will be interesting to see what critics have to say about the "neo-futuristic façades" of Hadid's three residential towers rising on "an abandoned cancer cluster site" in Brisbane.
- Berg cheers Sejong City, South Korea's new seat of government that promises "a new form of urbanism - perhaps the largest test of a new approach to citymaking - one that here starts with landscape architecture."
- Q&A with Laurinda Spear re: why ArquitectonicaGEO: "we realized that landscape thinking was not incorporated into our designs and added only later. It was initiated with the idea that architects and landscape architects can and should work synergistically."
- Flint bemoans the end of his summer at the beach with "an end-of-days feeling" because of climate change; now "there's a whole new game" in the real estate world: "calculating where the new coastline is going to be, and thus what are effectively going to be the waterfront properties of the future."
- A look at how cities across the country, despite lack of state or federal support, are embracing resiliency measures, "using natural disasters as a way to get their infrastructure, personnel, and budgets better prepared for the next."
- An Australian launches a website where scientists "express their fear, frustration, distress, and confusion about the growing threat of climate change and the politicization of the issue."
- Hosey delves deeply into the green building rating wars (lobbyists and big bucks and chemicals and timber...oh my!).
- Kops argues that while LEED may be the "dominant green building rating system," the Living Building Challenge is "is raising the bar" to "design for positive impact" rather than just limit the negative.
- A new survey looks at where architects and designers get their understanding of people from: "Mostly, subjective observation and untested assumption" rather than fact-based evidence, but "in the face of continuing and rapid social change, our traditions must evolve."
- A great take on how and why millennial-generation architects "just might be the ones to push social responsibility out into the world."
- Weizman explains "forensic architecture" and what it reveals about the conflict in Gaza and elsewhere ("home-pickled cucumbers and endless cups of coffee" included).
- Lamster comes away with glass-half-full and glass-half-empty feelings after leading a panel discussion on "the profession's failure to promote and retain women. The good news is that the first step to rectifying this problem is acknowledging its existence - but the bad news is pretty darn bad."
- A look at how mergers, like the recent HOK/ 360 Architecture deal, are changing the business of design.
- World Monuments Fund and AmEx award preservation grants to nine historic sites on the 2014 World Monuments Watch list.
- Call for entries: GSA has put out a Request for Information/RFI to optimize use of the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center in Cambridge, MA.

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Carbuncle Cup 2014 winner announced: ...Woolwich Central, a Sheppard Robson-designed mixed-use scheme in south east London..ticked all the boxes for this year's wooden spoon. A classic case of gross overdevelopment, the scheme is lumpen and oppressive... By Thomas Lane -- Broadway Malyan; Stride Treglown; BDP; CZWG; 3D Reid [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Arles' towering folly: The ancient French town has no need for Frank Gehry's flashy intervention: ...defiantly a "destination building" ...But its uses are vague...Arles doesn't need rescuing from oblivion by a single miraculous piece of architecture...Sadly Arles LUMA will happen...just as the Romans did – an example of how rich aristocrats displayed their wealth with buildings whose time has now run out. By Amanda Baillieu [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

A Banker's Bold Vision Inspires an Arts Center, and Neighbors' Doubts: ...curved wings of the Centro Botin are...rising from pillars embedded on the public waterfront...provoking some legal complaints and scorn from critics who say that Santander's public quay and seaside views are being exploited for private use - to build a modern-day pyramid for the glory of a banker in his company town..."we are not taking away public space," Piano said. -- Banco Santander; Renzo Piano- New York Times

Zaha Hadid brings grace to Brisbane with redesign of abandoned ABC broadcasting site: ...designs three glass towers complete with a neo-futuristic façade for an abandoned cancer cluster site...Ranging from 22 to 25 storeys..."Grace on Coronation"... [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Sejong City: By merging landscape and architecture, Balmori Associates and H Architecture/Haeahn Architecture aim to create a new seat of government for South Korea - and a new form of urbanism...perhaps the largest test of a new approach to citymaking - one that here starts with landscape architecture. By Nate Berg [images]- Architect Magazine

WAN talks to Laurinda Spear: What inspired you to develop the ArquitectonicaGEO arm of the business in 2005? ..."we realized that landscape thinking was not incorporated into our designs and added only later. It was clear that this did not foster the best design solutions. ArquitectonicaGEO was initiated with the idea that architects and landscape architects can and should work synergistically." - World Architecture News (UK)

Beachfront in the Time of Climate Change: ...there's something sinister about being near the water. It's an end-of-days feeling, the grim reality that, because of climate change, these places are going to be very different in 30 to 50 years...there's a whole new game..calculating where the new coastline is going to be, and thus what are effectively going to be the waterfront properties of the future. By Anthony Flint- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Facing Climate Change, Cities Embrace Resiliency: Lacking substantial state or federal support, local governments throughout the country are using natural disasters as a way to get their infrastructure, personnel and budgets better prepared for the next...six of the 10 most expensive storms in the U.S. occurred in the last decade. By Daniel C. Vock -- Rockefeller Foundation 100 Resilient Cities - Governing Magazine

Scientists Go Beyond Science to Explain Their Climate Terror: Joe Duggan has set up a website [Is This How You feel?] hosting handwritten letters in which scientists express their fear, frustration, distress, and confusion about the growing threat of climate change and the politicization of the issue. - National Journal (Washington, DC)

The Green Building Wars: Is Green Globes a credible alternative to LEED? If LEED serves the middle of the green bell curve, the Living Building Challenge targets the leading edge...Green Globes can be "faster and cheaper" than LEED, as Jerry Yudelson insists. But "better"? No. By Lance Hosey -- Green Building Initiative (GBI); USGBC- Metropolis Magazine

Designing Buildings That Work Like Flowers: The dominant green building rating system is...LEED...but there's an emergent

green certification that is raising the bar. Instead of attempting to limit the negative impact of the built environment...Living Building Challenge is a challenge to design for positive impact...an inspiration for the design community to imagine a built environment that works in harmony with nature. By Melissa Kops/Centerbrook Architects - Hartford Courant (Connecticut)

As architects and designers, where does our understanding of people come from? Mostly, subjective observation and untested assumption, as a survey by...Evidence Based Design Journal discovers...something deep in the culture of design that gets in our way – our training...in the face of continuing and rapid social change, our traditions must evolve. By Darragh O'Brien/Architectural Research Consultancy (ARC) - ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Architecture for the people, by the people: ...community architecture, a process designed to connect architecture students with the people and communities around them - and bring good design to problems, people, and places that wouldn't be able to afford the high-priced field without it...Questions of social responsibility in architecture have a long history...Millennial-generation architects just might be the ones to push these ideas out into the world. By Isa Hopkins -- Steve Badanes; Andrew Freear/Rural Studio; Public Architecture- Grist Magazine

What can 'forensic architecture' reveal about the conflict in Gaza? Bulldozing new roads, using buildings as weapons ... to the Israeli architect Eyal Weizman, city warfare leaves clues in the very architecture. He's piecing together the evidence... "The Architecture of Violence"...latest instalment of..."Rebel Architecture"... By Ellie Violet Bramley [images]- Guardian (UK)

Why Are There Not Enough Women Architects? I'm not sure whether I should be happy or sad that there was a standing-room-only crowd [at the Dallas Center for Architecture]...for a panel discussion on the profession's failure to promote and retain women. The good news...is that the first step to rectifying this problem is acknowledging its existence...but the bad news is pretty darn bad. By Mark Lamster- Dallas Morning News

Is Bigger Better? HOK's Acquisition of 360 Architecture and How Mergers Have Changed the Business of Design -- CRS; AECOM- ArchDaily

American Express and World Monuments Fund Award \$1.5 Million in Preservation Grants to Nine Historic Sites on 2014 World Monuments Watch: Sites span the globe from Tanzania to Mexico...the second allocation from a \$5 million, five-year grant...- World Monuments Fund/WMF

Call for entries: Request for information/RFI: Optimization of the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts; deadline: October 10- U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)

ANN Feature: Avoiding the Greenwash: Don't be swayed by eco-friendly claims. Questions to ask, and resources for answers, to help select products that will best meet green projects' - and the planet's - sustainability needs. By Cameron Forte- ArchNewsNow

OMA: G-Star Raw HQ, Amsterdam: Just like the denim that made the company famous, the notion of raw surfaces is also at the core of their new headquarters...it is often debated whether the architecture actually ends up enhancing or conflicting with the company's 'brand values'. In the case of Rem Koolhaas and the Dutch jeans company...the combination seemed like a natural fit... By Ulf Meyer -- Office for Metropolitan Architecture

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